

Message Text

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44

ACTION AF-18

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT SU

SUBJ: NIMEIRI ANNOUNCES CABINET CHANGES

1. SUMMARY: NIMEIRI JULY 21 ANNOUNCED NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CHANGES IN KEY GOVERNMENT POSITIONS. AS FIRST MAJOR SHIFTS IN OVER YEAR, THEY LONG ANTICIPATED. MOST SIGNIFICANT APPEAR BE REPLACEMENT TECHNOCRATS IN MINISTRY AGRICULTURE AND NATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION BY POLITICAL/MILITARY TYPES CLOSE TO NC NIRI. IN GENERAL, WE CAN SEE LITTLE LIKLIHOOD THAT NEW FACES WILL BRING ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGE OR IMPROVEMENT IN GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE. END SUMMARY.

2. AS REPORTED FBIS, PRESIDENT NIMEIRI JULY 21 ANNOUNCED NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CHANGES IN KEY GOVERNMENT POSITIONS AND ONE STRUCTURAL CHANGE. LATTER WAS KWAWARATION IRRIGATION AND ELECTRIC POWER FROM MINISTRY AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES, MAKING IT INTO SEPARATE MINISTRY. YAHYA ABDEL MAJID WHO WAS MINSTATE FOR IRRIGATION, REMAINS IN CHARGE WITH RANK OF MINISTER 6

3. PERSONNEL CHANGES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

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MAJOR ABDUL GASSIM MUHAMMAD IBRAHIM - SHIFTED FROM MINISTER

HEALTH TO MINISTER AGRICULTURE.

WADIE HABASHI - FROM MINISTER AGRICULTURE TO CHAIRMAN
NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH (NCR).

NASIR DEFALLAI- FROM CHAIRMAN NCR TO MINISTER OF HEALTH.
MAJORNWEN. AQISSAHMAD KHALIFA - FROM DE UTY CHIEF OF STAFF,
PEOPLES ARMED FORCES TO COMMISSIONER GENERAL
FOR DEVELOPMENT (GENERALLY EQUIVALENT TO MINISTER
PLANNING). FORMER COMMISSIONER GENERAL MUHAMMED
ABDEL MAJID IS SIMPLY DROPPED.

ABBAS ABDEL MAJID - FROM CHAIRMAN, GIZIRA BOARD TO
COMMISSIONER NORTHER KORDOFAN PROVINCE.

AHMED SALEH BURKHARI - FROM COMMISSIONER NORTHER
KORDOFAN TO AMBASSADOR IN MIN FONAFFAIRS (BUKHARI IS
CAREER DIPLOMAT SERVICNG PREVIOUSLY AS AMBASSADOR IN
ADDIS ABABA AND LONDON).

SADDIQ BEDRI - FROM GENERAL MANAGER WEST SENNAR SUGAR
PROJECT TO CHAIRMAN, GIZIRA BOARD.

MUHAMMED MIRGHANI MUBARAK - FROM AMBASSADOR IN CAIRO TO
UNDERS SECRETARY, MINISTRY FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

DR. KAMAL AGABAWI - RELIEVED FROM POST AS MINISTER OF
STATE FOR PRODUCTION IN MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. NO
REPLACEMENT NAMED.

4. COMMENT: CHANGES CAME SOMWHAT AS SURPRISE WITH
LITTLE ADVANCE SPECULATION. THERE HAVE HOWEVER BEEN RUMORS
OFF AND ON OF CHANGES FOR AT LEAST PAST SEVEN MONTHS
AND IN FACT THIS HAS BEEN LONGEST PERIOD ON FIVE YEARS
NIMEIRI ADMINISTRATION (SINCE MAY 1973) WITHOUT
SIGNIFICANT CABINET CHANGES. SOME SHIFTS WERE THEREFORE
ALMOST INEVITABLE SOONER RATHER THAN LATER.

5. AS FOR SIGNIFICANCE, AS WE VIEW IT, TWO MOST IMPORTANT
MOVES WERE REPLACEMENT TECHNOCRATS IN MINSTRY AGRICULTURE
AND NATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION BY POLITICAL/
MILITARY TYPES MUCH CLOSER TO NIMEIRI THAN THEIR
PREDESSOR. TO BEST OUR KNOWLEDGE NEITHER MAJ. ABDUL
GASIM OR MAJ. GEN. AWAD HAVE ANY EXPERTISE IN THEIR NEW
FIELDS, BUTH THEN ONE OF CRITICISMS OF HABASHI (FORMER MINAG)
AXS THAT WHILE HE WAS AGRICULTURISTS, HE THOUGHT HE KNEW
EVERYTHING AND MEDDLED IN AREAS WHERE HIS EXPERTISE
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DISTINCTLY LIMITED. INTERESTING QUESTION IS HOW MAJ. ABDUL
GASIM WILL HAVE TIME ADMINISTER KEY AGRICULTURE MINISTRY
WHLE PERFORMING HIS TIME CONSUMING DUTIES AS DEPUTY
SYG OF SUDAN SOCIALIST UNION AND GENERAL TROUBLE SHOOTER
FOR NIMEIRI. SEPARATION MINIRRIGATION BACK TO
STATUS IT HAD PRIOR MAY 73 WILL HELP, BUT IT
NEVERTHELESS APPEARS THAT NIMEIRI MAY BE OVERBURDENING
HIS ONE REMAINING RCC COLLEAGUES.

6. RE SHIFT MUHAMMAD MIRGAHNI FROM CAIRO TO FONMINISTRY, THIS BRINGS SEASONED DIPLOMAT WHO CLOSE TO MANSOUR KHALID INTO THIS KEY POSITION. IT BOUND TO BE IMPROVEMENT OVER LARGELY INEFFECTUAL PREDECESSOR FADUL OBEID WHO WAS NAMED SEVERAL WEEKS AGO AS AMBASSADOR IN MINISTRY AND MAQ BE HEADED FOR RETIREMENT.

7. CHANGE IN GEZIRA BOARD IS PKTERESTING IN THAT ABBAS ABDEL MAJID GENERALLY CREDITED WITH DOEING GOOD JOB OVER PAST YEAR (UNLIKE HIS PREDECESSOR AGABAWI WHO NOW OUT OF GOVERNMENT ALTOGETHER). WE HAVE HEARD SOME REPORTS THAT ABDEL MAJID HIMSELF WANTED OUT, NOT CARING FOR BEING IN POSITION WHERE HE COULD BE EASILY BLAMED FOR BAD RESULTS DUE TO FACTORS BEYOND HIS CONTROL (E.G., FUEL SHORTAGES, LACK OF FERTILIZER, ETC. WHICH CRITICAL TO GEZIRA PRODUCTION). HE HAS MOREOVER EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN KORDOFAN SO HIS ASSIGNMENT THERE MAKES SOME SENSE. HIS REPLACEMENT IN GEZIRA IS MEMBER WILL KNOWN BEDRI FAMILY AND REPORTEDLY QUITE CAPABLE. HE WILL NEED SOME LUCK AS WELL, HOWEVER.

8. IN GENERAL, WE SEE LITTLE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT CHANGES WILL RESULT IN ANY SIGNIFICANT POLICY SHIFTS OR PARTICULAR IMPROVEMENT IN GOVERNMENT'S PERFORMANCE. PERHAPS THEY TIGHTEN NIMEIRI'S CONTROL IN SEVERAL KEY AREAS, BUT IN MANY RESPECTS THEY JUST FOR SHOW - TO DEMONSTRATE SOMETHING IS HAPPENING.
SANDERSON

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